

CITY OF BELMONT
PLANNING COMMISSION

ACTION MINUTES

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2006 7:00 PM

Chair Parsons called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at One Twin Pines Lane, City Hall Council Chambers.

1. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Parsons, Horton, Frautschi, Mayer, McKenzie, Mercer, Wozniak

Staff Present: Community Development Director de Melo (CDD), Zoning Technician Gill (ZT), City Attorney Zafferano, (CA), Recording Secretary Flores (RS).

2. AGENDA AMENDMENTS - None

3. COMMUNITY FORUM (Public Comments) - None

4. CONSENT CALENDAR

4A. Minutes of September 5, 2006

MOTION: By Commissioner Frautschi, seconded by Vice Chair Horton, to accept the Action Minutes of Tuesday, September 5, 2006, with the correction that Vice Chair Horton abstained rather than voting no on the Minutes of August 1, 2006.

Ayes: Frautschi, Horton, Mercer, Wozniak, Parsons

Noes: None

Abstain: Mayer, McKenzie

Motion passed 5/0/2

5. NEW BUSINESS

5A. Final Landscape and Irrigation Plan – 850 South Road

CDD de Melo summarized the staff memorandum, recommending approval as proposed.

Responding to questions from the Commission, applicant Colleen Devlin stated that the creeping fig will be included in the final plans, the Dogwoods were selected after consulting with Carlmont Nursery, the oak tree is in the largest available area (which is near the trash container), and a new irrigation system will be included in the final plans.

MOTION: By Commissioner McKenzie, seconded by Commissioner Frautschi, to adopt the Resolution approving a Final Landscape Plan for 850 South Road (Appl. No. 2006-0031).

Ayes: McKenzie, Frautschi, Mayer, Mercer, Wozniak, Horton, Parsons

Noes: None

Motion passed 7/0

CDD de Melo stated that he will assure that the irrigation plan is included in the building permits and the creeping fig will be noted as part of that submittal.

5B. Final Landscape and Irrigation Plan – 2723 St. James Road

Chair Parsons recused himself from this discussion as he lives across the street from the subject property; Vice Chair Horton acted as Chair.

CDD de Melo summarized the staff memorandum, recommending approval as proposed.

Responding to questions from the Commission, Patricia Pollock, architect, estimated that the existing cedars are about 35' tall and have been there over 20 years, they plan to mulch around the bare areas, will use Blue Fescue on the eastern side of the house and Liriope on the westerly side, and a contractor has told them that additional drip irrigation can be added to the existing system.

Commissioner Frautschi thanked the applicant for reducing the concrete area.

MOTION: By Commissioner Frautschi, seconded by Commissioner McKenzie, to adopt the Resolution approving a Final Landscape Plan for 2723 St. James Road (Appl. No. 22006-0051).

Ayes: Frautschi, McKenzie, Mayer, Mercer, Wozniak, Horton
Noes: None
Abstain: Parsons

Motion passed 6/0/1

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

6A. PUBLIC HEARING – 1075 Old County Road

To consider a Design Review for establishment of a Master Sign Program to permit new signage for an existing multi-tenant office building. (Appl. No. 2006-0068)

APN: 040-332-270; Zoned: C-4 (Highway Commercial)

CEQA Status: Categorical Exemption per Section 15303

Applicant: Dale Meyer, Architect

Owner: Sven Kjaersgaard

ZT Gill summarized the staff report, recommending approval subject to the conditions of approval attached to the draft resolution. There were no questions for staff from the Commission.

Dale Meyer, 851 Burlway Road, Burlingame, architect for the project, answered questions from the Commission, stating as follows:

- The colors selected for the sign match the approved colors of the building.
- On recommendation of an arborist, the grass on the mound at the front of the sign will be replaced with ground cover because the grass was not allowing the cork trees to breathe and they were turning yellow.
- Commissioner Wozniak felt the suites should be lettered starting with A.
- Lighting down was not considered because, with the 5' sign, light bulbs would be sticking up and there would be greater chance for vandalism. They felt it would be a more secure and safe approach to have the lighting in the ground.
- All four occupants access through the same lobby entrance – two tenants are upstairs, two downstairs.
- They will add a few bushes around the gas and electrical fixtures, if desired.
- The collapsing retaining wall on the right side of the property belongs to the adjacent property owner. The two owners have discussed it but Mr. Meyer did not know the outcome of that conversation.
- The correct zoning for the property is C4 – Service Commercial.
- He understands from the landscape architect that the ground cover that is in front of the sign comes off the ground similar to ice plant, and will come up to the sign.

Chair Parsons opened the public hearing. No one came forward to speak.

MOTION: By Vice Chair Horton, seconded by Commissioner Frautschi, to close the Public Hearing. Motion passed.

MOTION: By Commissioner Wozniak, seconded by Commissioner Frautschi, to adopt the Resolution approving a Design Review at 1075 Old County Road (Appl. No. 2006-0068), with the conditions of approval attached.

Ayes: Wozniak, Frautschi, McKenzie, Mercer, Horton, Parsons

Noes: None

Abstain: Mayer

Motion passed 6/0/1

Chair Parsons suggested that the applicant get their sprinkler systems turned back on as soon as possible because the landscaping is looking bad.

Chair Parsons noted that this item may be appealed to the City Council within 10 days.

7. REPORTS, STUDIES AND UPDATES

A. Motel 6 – 1101 Shoreway Road (Verbal update)

CDD de Melo will keep this item on the agenda as a follow-up to see if the increased security has reduced the number of police service calls to the facility. He has been in communication with the Finance Director regarding the issue of TOT collections, who is looking into it not only for Motel 6 but other hotels as well. He agreed to do a survey to determine if the conditions of approval and the site plan are in compliance.

B. Chuck's Donuts – 641 Ralston Avenue (Verbal update)

CA Zafferano reported that the owner has until October 15th to complete a proposed settlement agreement, which is to plant two trees in front and two trees in back of the property to replace the two that were chopped down. Discussion ensued about the possibility of having the property owner pay the City in lieu of planting the trees in front in order to coordinate it with the sidewalk widening project being undertaken by the Public Works Department as approved at the last Commission meeting. CA Zafferano felt that it would be difficult to design public improvements with a code enforcement settlement, but he will discuss it with staff to see if there is anything that can be done in the way of coordination. They are also waiting to see what the owner's response is to the settlement proposal; perhaps there will be an opportunity to back off and suggest doing something different. He agreed that this is an interesting suggestion and will report back.

C. \$2.50 Cleaners – 678 Ralston Avenue (Verbal Update)

CDD de Melo reported that the tenant and owner have been totally unresponsive to phone calls and letters and, under the new administrative code enforcement fines system, are into the multi-thousands in terms of fines. They obtained administrative review approval for the \$1.75 Cleaners sign several years previously but did not follow the same action for the \$2.50 sign. At the Commission's request, CA Zafferano explained the City's collection options.

D. Discretionary Review Project Approvals/Follow-Up/Monitoring

CDD de Melo stated that this item was placed on the agenda at the request of Commissioner Wozniak.

Commissioner Wozniak requested that a regular review process be established so that the Commission could be informed on how projects are actually implemented and what they really look like, without making a lot of work for staff. She suggested that the applicant be required to submit six pictures of their property as part of the planning permit process, which could be copied and distributed to Commissioners. This requirement would have the added advantage of informing the applicant that the Commission will be reviewing the project after it is completed. She feels that currently the loop does not get closed.

After discussion, CDD de Melo agreed that at Planning's final sign-off, staff will take "after" photos and send an email to the Commission listing Certificates of Occupancy that have been issued for addresses where they initially looked at the project. He noted that the lag time between Commission approval and completion can be anywhere from 1 to 2 years, and that occasionally bonds or letters of credit are issued to allow the landscaping to be postponed for financial reasons. Commissioner Wozniak asked that they also be notified if there were any remarkable events such as landslide or flood.

Commissioner Frautschi asked staff to follow up on the landscaping for a house on Avon three houses from Fairway where there has been woodchips in the front yard for two years.

Commissioner Frautschi asked for an update on a house on Mezes that has been built different than the approved plans. CDD de Melo agreed to add this project to the next Planning Commission agenda.

Commissioner Frautschi asked if a letter had been sent to Notre Dame Elementary School regarding the new noise ordinance. CDD de Melo responded that he plans to meet with the elementary, high school and college, as well as commercial businesses, to discuss the ordinance, and that the Code Enforcement officer has prepared a trifold to mail to these institutions as well as to include in water bills.

CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF TUESDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2006

Liaison: Commissioner Wozniak
Alternate Liaison: Commissioner Parsons

8. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:23 p.m. to a regular meeting on Tuesday, October 17, 2006, at 7:00 pm at Belmont City Hall.